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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Rice Visit Pleases Ankara - Sabah
Rice Regards Turkey As A 'Special' Example - Milliyet
Rice: Al-Qaeda, PKK Actions Are Unacceptable - Milliyet
Rice: We Will Halt PKK Attacks Against Turkey - Turkiye
Rice: PKK No Different Than Al-Qaeda - Aksam
Rice Attempts To Ease Ankara Concerns On Kirkuk - Aksam
Gul Says Cooperation With US Continues - Turkiye
Gul To Rice: Turkey Can Contribute To Middle East Peace - Hurriyet
Rice Says US Working To Help Turkish Cypriots - Hurriyet
Rice Thanks Gul For Turkey's Support In Afghanistan - Hurriyet

OPINION MAKERS

US Got What It Wanted: AKP Accepts Rice Offer For Cooperation - Cumhuriyet
US 'Understands' Turkey's Concerns, No Guarantees - Zaman
AKP Decides To Continue With US - Cumhuriyet
Rice: US-Turkey Relationship Based On Common Interests - Cumhuriyet
Rice, Gul Discuss 'Strategic Image' - Radikal
Rice Pledges to Preserve Iraq's Territorial Integrity - Radikal
Rice: US Also Uses Non-Military Ways to Fight PKK - Yeni Safak
Gul: Consultations With US Will Continue - Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's Ankara visit: US

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Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's weekend visit pleased

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Turkish officials, "Sabah" reports. Secretary Rice pledged US support for a unified Iraq, and assured Ankara that US forces in the region will not tolerate the separatist PKK. 'Secretary Rice's call on Ankara after Richard Armitage, Doug Feith and John Abizaid is a pleasing development,' FM Gul said last week in evaluating the Rice visit. Growing anti-American sentiment in Turkey topped the agenda of the Rice visit, the paper claims. Rice complained to Gul that strong criticism of the US by Turkish officials had fanned anti-American feelings in the country. Gul said the Turks were naturally disappointed that the US had ignored Turkey's sensitivities with regard to Kirkuk and the PKK, "Sabah" claims. FM Gul also asked Secretary Rice to support direct US flights to Ercan Airport in north Cyprus. Rice responded that some technical issues remain to be resolved, but that consultations with Turkey would continue on the issue. "Cumhuryret" claims that 'the United States got what it wanted' during the visit, and reports that Turkey agreed to expand its strategic cooperation with the Bush Administration. Secretary Rice's call on Turkish leaders diminished the strain in US-Turkey relations, the paper added. 'Disagreements do not constitute the core of our relationship, and they should not cast a shadow on our strategic partnership,' FM Gul reportedly told Rice during their meeting on Sunday. 'Turkey is not an ordinary democracy, it is also a Muslim country,' Rice said, suggesting that Ankara expand cooperation with the US on the Broader Middle East initiative: 'Turkey is a valuable example which shows that Islam and democracy are compatible. We want to continue working with you on that subject,' Rice reportedly told the Foreign Minister. Gul responded positively, according to "Cumhuryet." "Milliyet" and

"Zaman" claim that Secretary Rice declined to give guarantees regarding Kirkuk. 'It is for all Iraqis to agree on the future of Kirkuk, and the US and Turkey have issued joint messages to that end,' Rice reportedly stressed. The leftist-intellectual "Birgun" says the Rice visit has eased the strain in bilateral ties. The paper reports that Rice emphasized that the US Administration had 'gotten past' its disappointment over the Turkish parliament's rejection of a proposal to allow US troops to pass through Turkey on their way to Iraq. 'Otherwise, the US would not have supported Turkey's drive for EU membership so strongly,' Rice said. The Islamist-oriented, pro-Government "Yeni Safak" highlighted Rice's remarks in which the Secretary reassured the Turks on US pledges to curb the activities of the separatist PKK: 'We are also using non-military means against the PKK, including the cutting of financial resources and its line of communications with the outside world,' Rice reportedly said. Secretary Rice underlined in a joint press conference with FM Gul before leaving Ankara on Sunday that the US-Turkey relationship is fundamentally strong, because it is based on common values of democracy and freedom. 'It is not a strained relationship, it is a solid relationship,' Rice said. FM Gul agreed, saying the two countries would continue to collaborate closely on economic, diplomatic and security issues. Secretary Rice later flew to Jerusalem for talks with Israeli and Palestinian leaders.

EDITORIAL OPINION: The Visit of Secretary Rice

"The Fire Dance"
Erdal Safak wrote in the mass appeal "Sabah" (2/7): "Have you noticed that it's difficult even to get Prime Minister Erdogan and Foreign Minister Gul in the same photograph these days? They claim this is due to scheduling conflicts, but there are reasons to be skeptical. For example, while Erdogan was saying that 'conditions for elections in Iraq were not democratic,' Gul released a statement saying that the elections were a success that was well appreciated by Turkey. When Erdogan said 'now that the elections are over, the US should announce a timetable for withdrawal, Gul noted that 'the US has not yet completed its mission' in Iraq. Erdogan says his anti-US statements result from Turkey's 'sensitivities about regional developments,' and Gul insists that the PM's remarks have been taken out of context. But again, while Erdogan was traveling in Asia, FM Gul asked 'why would we want to have bad relations with the United States when America remains the world's only superpower, when we established comprehensive, friendly relations with the US during the multipolar period? Is such a thing possible? Is it logical?' Of course, during this period it is only natural that we should follow a policy line that comports with the views of the European Union. But we also really need to ask ourselves this: Why is it that at a time when US-EU relations are clearly improving, Turkey keeps increasing tensions by these kinds of statements? Apparently, Turkey's EU harmonization is not yet complete."

"The Messages from Rice"
Cuneyt Ulsever analyzed in the mass appeal "Hurriyet" (2/7): "The Rice visit indicated that the second Bush administration is trying to rebuild trust with Turkey. Secretary Rumsfeld made some speculative remarks about the

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rejection of the March 1 parliamentary decree, and his words provided a solid ground for what Rice had to say to Turkish officials in Ankara. The Rice message in Ankara can be summarized as follows: The US is looking for Turkey's help for its radical policies in the Middle East, including in Iran, Syria, and Palestine. The Turkish help support should be direct and clear. If Turkey chooses not to do that, then we cannot help Turkey on issues such as northern Iraq, Kirkuk, Cyprus, the EU, and even the IMF. The Turkish government is going to face many challenges in this new period."

"Is Turkey Becoming a Central Base?"
Mustafa Balbay argued in the leftist-nationalist "Cumhuriyet" (2/7): "It seems that Turkey is being transformed into a multidimensional central state as the rest of the world is being reshaped around its core, the US. It was interesting that Rice started using rhetoric about a 'strategic relationship' with Turkey. This strategic relationship covers everything, including the use of Incirlik airbase, and working together on steps to be taken against Iran, as mentioned last week by Douglas Feith. After the Feith visit, we listened to Bush name Syria and Iran as new targets in his State of the Union speech. Finally Rice explained US expectations in a more detailed way. Among others, she made the following chilling remark: 'Turkey and the US will share mutual interests in the future as well.' Given the American plan to reshape the Middle East, it is not hard to predict what kind of 'mutual interests' we are going to share. In the new period, the US

will likely impose demands on us and manage to get what it wants. Turkey will likely continue to assume out-of-area responsibilities such as the one in Afghanistan. Turkey will continue to be presented as a model for the Broader Middle East. In this context, the US will focus on making the Turkish system more 'moderate.' Turkey will assume even more of a role if things go very wrong in Iraq. In the event of negative developments in Iraq that threaten Turkey's interests, we will be given 'tranquilizers' instead of having the problem solved."

"A Very Important Visit"

Yilmaz Oztuna wrote in the conservative "Turkiye" (2/7):
"The Rice visit had a message: The US will pressure Iran to give up support for terrorism support and its nuclear plans, or else there will be consequences. Rice wanted to see if Turkey is ready to meet its obligations as an ally if and when needed by the US. In the event that Ankara does not support for US policy, there will be an American alliance with Kurdistan and Armenia. . The US is asking for a spirit of strategic alliance from Turkey, while hoping for understanding from Saudi Arabia and Egypt in the event of a US action against Iran and Syria. Otherwise, the US is determined to bring democracy to these two countries by using its own resources."

EDELMAN